



Sustainable agricultural intensification research and learning in Africa

The Sustainable agricultural intensification research and learning in Africa (SAIRLA) project is a five-year program (2015–2020) funded by the UK Department of International Development. The project seeks to generate new evidence and design tools to enable governments, investors and other key actors to deliver more effective policies and investments in sustainable agricultural intensification (SAI) that strengthen the capacity of poorer farmers', especially women and young people, to access and benefit from SAI. SAIRLA has commissioned research and will facilitate multi-scale learning to understand different ways of achieving SAI and its developmental implications. Ethiopia is one of the six SAIRLA project focus countries in Africa.

National learning alliances

Complex problems, such as how to deliver equitable sustainable agricultural intensification in Africa, require innovative solutions. Finding such solutions requires diverse stakeholders to engage and learn together with the ultimate aim of developing the collective commitment and capacity to turn ideas and plans into action. This can be achieved through facilitating multi-stakeholder engagement and learning processes.

The National learning alliances (NLAs) are being established in each of the target countries: Ethiopia, Tanzania, Ghana, Malawi, Burkina Faso and Zambia aiming at co-generating, sharing and facilitating use of knowledge by SAIRLA research projects, decision makers (policymakers and investors) and other key stakeholders to develop equitable sustainable agricultural intensification in ways that enable women, youth and poorer smallholders to participate in and benefit from agricultural development. The NLA participants will engage in multi-stakeholder learning processes by which knowledge is generated, shared and used by SAIRLA research projects, decision makers and other key stakeholders.

The Ethiopia NLA—led by the International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI) for the period 2017–2019—comprises five key members (an Ethiopia NLA facilitator, gender, communications, monitoring and evaluation experts, and a capacity development specialist) who work closely with the four research project representatives in designing and implementing the alliance strategy.



SAIRLA target countries

Research project summaries

In order to effectively address the limitations for women and poorer smallholders to access, deliver and benefit from SAI, eight multi-country projects have been commissioned by SAIRLA. Four of these multi-country projects are being undertaken in Ethiopia

Research and learning for sustainable intensification of smallholder livestock value chains

This project seeks to use inclusive participatory processes to integrate environmental, economic and equity considerations into policymaking and implementation decisions around livestock intensification and focuses in Burkina Faso, Ethiopia and Tanzania. The project is led by Stockholm Environment Institute, working in collaboration with International Livestock Research Institute, Institut de l'Environnement et de Recherches Agricoles, Environment and Climate Research Centre at the Ethiopian Development Research Institute, and Sokoine University of Agriculture.

Project sites in Ethiopia: Atsbi-Womberta woreda, Tigray region

Bringing evidence to bear on negotiating ecosystem service and livelihood trade-offs in sustainable agricultural intensification

This project seeks to build an interdisciplinary research program to increase the uptake of context-appropriate SAI innovations in East and southern Africa through evidence generation, data analytics and the development of innovative tools for stakeholder engagement with evidence.



A highly productive Teff field in Haik, South Wollo zone (photo credit: ICRISAT/Tilahun Amede)

Project action areas will focus on key agricultural regions in Ethiopia, Tanzania and Zambia. The World Agroforestry Centre leads this project in collaboration with the: Department of Geography and Environmental Studies at Addis Ababa University; Department of Soil Science at Sokoine University of Agriculture; Environmental Management Unit of the Tanzania Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries; and Zambia Agricultural Research Institute.

Project sites in Ethiopia: Ziway Woreda in East Showa zone, Oromia region.

Smallholder risk management solutions

This project focuses on Ethiopia and Malawi and seeks to address the research into the key risk factors for smallholders in participating in SAI, and the risk management strategies that can be put in place to manage them. Specifically, the project focuses on increasing smallholder access to inputs and participation in the development of commercial value chains. The Oxford Policy Management leads this project in close collaboration with the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics, Bunda College and Wollo University, Busara Center for Behavioural Economics, and the Amhara Regional Agricultural Research Institute.

Project sites in Ethiopia: Tewledere Woreda South Wollo of Amhara region

Combining lean data and crowd-sourcing for household-specific targeting of agricultural advisory services

This project seeks to design and implement new digitally-supported information services that will help farmers make decisions during the intensification process through the adoption of three approaches: user-centred design; lean data approach; and crowdsourcing or citizen-farmer science. The project will combine elements from these approaches to create a digitally-supported agro-advisory service and collect evidence on its effectiveness. The project is being implemented in Ethiopia, Kenya and Tanzania and led by Bioversity International working in close collaboration with Lutheran World Relief, Mekelle University, Naliende Agricultural Research Institute.

Project sites in Ethiopia: Degua Tembien and Emba Alajie woredas in Tigray Region

Further information

<http://www.sairla.nri.org/about-sairla>

<https://africa-rising.net/>

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